



# Superior Court of Arizona Juvenile Probation Department Maricopa County



## PROJECT PAYBACK

### A COMMUNITY APPROACH TO PROVIDING JUVENILE OFFENDERS WITH ALTERNATIVE WAYS TO REPAY VICTIMS

*Johnny broke the law by breaking into Mr. Smith's car. The police filed a complaint with the Juvenile Court, a hearing was held, and Johnny was **adjudicated** (found guilty). The Juvenile Court ordered Johnny to pay \$397 in **restitution** to Mr. Smith (\$279 to repair the car and \$118 for lost wages when Mr. Smith had to attend court). Johnny is only 14 years old so he is too young to get a job. Through **Project Payback** Johnny is able to work with a crew of six juveniles who are supervised by Juvenile Probation staff. The group works for a local business that has agreed to contribute to the **Restitution Fund** for each juvenile participating. Johnny works a total of 80 hours and, for each hour worked, Mr. Smith is paid directly from the Restitution Fund until the total of \$397 has been **paid back**. Johnny **learns responsibility and job skills, is held accountable** for his behavior with **meaningful consequences**, and, most importantly, **repays** the victim of his crime.*

### WHAT IS PROJECT PAYBACK?

When juveniles are adjudicated (found guilty) for violating the law, they are held accountable for their actions through Juvenile Court orders, which may require a juvenile to:

- ◆ Perform community service work
- ◆ Pay fines
- ◆ Spend time in a juvenile detention facility
- ◆ Attend counseling
- ◆ Participate in educational programs
- ◆ Pay restitution to victims

The orders are designed to provide **meaningful consequences** as well as to address issues in the juvenile's life that may have contributed to the delinquent behavior.

Many juvenile offenses impact **victims** who suffer damages such as physical harm, property damage, or psychological distress. Victims may be individuals, families, businesses, or communities. The Juvenile Court often orders monetary **restitution** be paid to the victim for medical expenses, repair of property damage, the cost of counseling for the victim, or reimbursement of lost wages due to time off work to obtain estimates or attend court. The Juvenile Court does not order restitution for pain and suffering.



**Project Payback** is a **restitution accountability program** developed by the Juvenile Probation Department in Maricopa County. The program consists of a **Restitution Fund** established by the County Board of Supervisors. Through **Project Payback**, juvenile offenders are able to earn money for the Restitution Fund which is used to **repay victims** of juvenile crime.

**Project Payback** is based on the principles of **Restorative Justice**. **Restorative Justice** is intended to **restore safety** to the community, **repair the harm** done to victims of juvenile crime, and to **hold offenders accountable** for their actions while teaching them valuable skills like teamwork and work ethic.



# PROJECT PAYBACK



## WHY CAN'T THESE KIDS GET A JOB?

**Project Payback** is designed specifically for juveniles financially unable to pay restitution and are unable to be employed. There are a number of reasons why a juvenile may be unable to pay restitution:

- ♦ The juvenile may be under the age of legal employment.
- ♦ Many employers will not hire youth who have committed certain criminal offenses.
- ♦ Mental or physical health issues may prevent the juvenile from maintaining employment.
- ♦ The juvenile's behavior patterns may cause him or her to require close supervision at all times.
- ♦ The juvenile may reside in a rural area with few job opportunities and no access to public transportation.

The program works by allowing juveniles that have been ordered to pay restitution to **convert** work hours into a monetary value to be paid directly to their victims from the **Restitution Fund**.



## WHAT YOU CAN DO TO HELP

**Project Payback** is a collaborative effort between the Juvenile Probation Department, area nonprofit agencies, local businesses, and community volunteers.

If you own or manage a business, you can enter into a **service contract** with the Juvenile Probation Department. In this contract, your business or agency agrees to pay a specific dollar amount into the **Restitution Fund** in exchange for services completed by a supervised group of juveniles. Your business will benefit from the services provided while, at the same time, giving a group of youth the opportunity to gain valuable work experience. The money contributed to the Restitution Fund will go directly to *pay back* victims of juvenile crime.



For more information about **Project Payback**, to establish a **service contract** with your organization, or for information about **volunteering**, please contact:

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